

I'm writing to urge the FCC to stop its plans to end critical safeguards designed to help ensure diversity of media ownership. Citizens' needs for diverse viewpoints won't be served if one company is able to own the newspaper, several TV and radio stations, and the cable system in a given community. As a community college librarian, I know how difficult it can be to find information about state and local news. Contrary to common belief, the Internet is not a significant source of regional or local news. I fear that if a few large, non-local companies control the major media in an area, fewer local people will be making decisions about what people in the local area need to know.

For example, in September, 2002 CBS pressured a Florida affiliate into showing the season premiere of "48 Hours," instead of a gubernatorial debate (Columbia Journalism Review, May/June 2003 <http://www.cjr.org/year/03/2/hickey.asp>).

Again, please remember consumers when reviewing rules on media ownership.

Sincerely,

Deborah Harris